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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 6288th meeting of the Security Council, held on 19 March 2010, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Central African region", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council reaffirms the statements of its Presidents of 24 September 1999 (S/PRST/1999/28), 31 August 2001 (S/PRST/2001/21), 31 October 2002 (S/PRST/2002/30), 29 June 2007 (S/PRST/2007/24), and its resolution 1209 (1998) of 19 November 1998, welcomes all initiatives taken by Member States following the adoption of the Programme of Action by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and takes note of the progress towards an Arms Trade Treaty.

"The Security Council is gravely concerned about the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world, particularly in the subregion of Central Africa, which have a wide range of humanitarian and socio-economic consequences, in particular on the security of civilians by fuelling armed conflict, which in turn exacerbates the risks of gender-based violence and recruitment of child soldiers and pose a serious threat to peace, reconciliation, safety, security, stability, and sustainable development at local, national, regional, and international levels.

"The Security Council, while acknowledging the right of all States to manufacture, import, export, transfer and retain the Conventional arms for self-defense and security needs consistent with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, underlines the vital importance of effective regulations and controls of the transparent trade in SALW in order to prevent their illegal diversion and re-export.

"The Security Council reiterates that Member States should comply with existing arms embargoes and export bans and take necessary steps to effectively implement these measures imposed by the Council in its relevant resolutions.

"The Security Council is alarmed that illicit transfers of SALW in contravention of arms embargoes and export bans, to or by criminal organizations or other irresponsible actors, including those suspected of

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engaging in terrorist acts, are linked with illicit trafficking of drugs, illegal exploitation of natural resources and illicit trade in such resources. The Security Council encourages all Member States that have not yet done so to accede, to ratify, and implement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, including the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunitions.

"The Security Council welcomes the various initiatives that are currently under way within the subregion, notes the efforts to establish a subregional register of small arms and encourages the Central African countries to take necessary measures to build up the capacity of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) through the establishment of a subregional register of arms dealers as well as the elaboration of a subregional legally binding instrument on the control of SALW, their ammunitions and all equipment that might serve for their manufacture.

"The Security Council reaffirms the importance of addressing the illicit arms trafficking, in particular, of SALW through an approach of common and shared responsibility, and encourages the States of the subregion to fully implement relevant measures adopted at the national, subregional, regional and international levels and to consider appropriate steps in this regard.

"The Security Council calls on the States of the subregion to strengthen efforts to establish mechanisms and regional networks among their relevant authorities for information sharing to combat the illicit circulation and trafficking in SALW. The Council also stresses the need for the States of the subregion to strengthen their cooperation, including through regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union, in order to identify and take appropriate measures against individuals and entities that engage in illegal trafficking of SALW in the Central African subregion.

"The Security Council emphasizes the need for national authorities in the subregion to fully participate in the practical implementation of the Programme of Action adopted on 20 July 2001 by the United Nations Conference of the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons adopted on 8 December 2005 and encourages Central African countries to regularly submit national reports to the Secretary-General, in accordance with the above-mentioned instrument.

"The Security Council encourages ECCAS to assist Central African countries in ensuring the effective implementation of arms embargoes imposed by the Council and, in this context, establish measures such as inquiries into illicit arms trafficking routes, the follow-up of possible violations and cooperation in border monitoring, in consultation with the countries concerned. In this regard, the Security Council encourages the committees in charge of monitoring arms embargoes in Central African countries and neighbouring countries, consistent with their mandates, to continue to include in the annual reports a substantive section on the implementation of arms embargoes, on possible violation of the measures reported to the Committees and with recommendations, as appropriate, for strengthening the effectiveness

of arms embargoes. This information could also be shared with the INTERPOL's International Weapons and Explosives Tracking System (IWETS).

"The Security Council encourages the Committees in charge of monitoring arms embargoes in Central African countries and neighbouring countries, consistent with their mandates, to establish channels of communication, with ECCAS, its Member States, and with the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

"The Security Council supports the action of the UN Missions present in the subregion, consistent with their mandates, to assist disarmament processes in the framework of DDR Programmes, and calls upon international partners to assist the Central African countries to build and strengthen their capacities to set up and implement measures relating to the prevention of illicit proliferation of SALW, and the security and management of stockpiles of arms, especially SALW.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of the forthcoming United Nations Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to consider the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects to be held in June 2010 and encourages Member States, including those in the subregion of Central Africa, to fully cooperate with the Chair to ensure a successful outcome of meeting.

"The Security Council encourages Member States to undertake vigorous actions aimed at restricting the supply of SALW and ammunitions to areas of instability in Central Africa.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to take into account in his biennial report, as a follow up, the content of the present PRST."